

C. J. Hemple

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## THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

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"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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### JOURNAL OF ABDOL MESSEE.

*Journal of a voyage up the Ganges from Calcutta to Agra, made by Abdool Messee, one of the Readers supported in India by the Church Missionary Society; written by one of the Chaplains of the Honorable East India Company*

(Continued from page 325.)

May 4.—The Mahomedan gentleman, who came to hear Abdool's discourse on Sunday, had, it seems, reported among his friends favourably of what he heard. In consequence, three of the chief men of the city, with forty or fifty other respectable Mahometans, assembled to-day, and sent a person to persuade Abdool to come and look at a house to hire.—Abdool went; and, in the way, the messenger confessed the true reason of his wishing him to go into the city. Abdool went on, nothing dismayed. On entering, he sat down at the lower end of the room. They desired him to come up higher. He said, the Gospel taught him to take the lowest seat, and that his rank did not entitle him to sit beside them.—They still desired he would come up higher. Then a Molawee, who had known Abdool some years ago, at Lucknow, said, in a kind of set discourse, "See here, Friends, this man, who used to fast three times a week, and is the son of such and such respectable ancestors, has forsaken the religion of his fathers; and is an instance of what a man will be when God intends to destroy him." Ab-

dool heard him out, and then answered, "If you had said that Satan had deceived me with the purpose of destroying me, I might have been silent; but your speech is a reproach upon God, as if he purposely led me into error. I have, indeed, left all my former ways, as you say; but it is as if a man should leave off idolatry. I have left that Idolatrous Worship of myself you refer to; and you should ascribe it to the grace of Christ, who has converted an Idolator." The usual objections were then discussed at great length, and with little heat; but that, now and then, the natural enmity of the mind would discover itself.

Abdool had taken his New Testament, which is his constant companion; and a copy of St. Matthew, which one of them received publicly. He answered all their objections by references to the New Testament, which made one of them say he would learn Hebrew that he might search the Original Scriptures. Abdool said, "Yes, Satan only desires that you should delay. At your time of life, you could scarce attain any knowledge of Hebrew before your death, and Satan desires you should die undecided." One of the chief men at length said, "Now, O Friends! I perceive that the day of judgment is near, and that Islam will not remain. The English will take away our faith." Abdool said, "Do not think that any thing like force will ever be used; for, be assured, that is contrary to the Gospel." One said, "True: their religion is doubtless a religion of good will, and without oppression." One asked Abdool, "And



do you intend to visit Delhi?"—"Yes," said he, "when I have opportunity." "Then," said another, "you will afflict many there."—Abdool: "The Gospel forbids to give any one pain, and if my conversation causes you pain, I do not wish you to send for me again." They all said, "No, no," and wished he would take a house near them.

On rising to come away, after three or four hours conversation, the Molawee who had known Abdool at Lucknow, said, "We sent for you, because we thought you were a worldly man, and had forsaken your religion for earthly motives; but, from your preaching in the Bazar, and your conversation just now, we perceive you are indeed become a Christian, and are lost to us." The person who had come to hear on Sunday, and who had sat silent all the time, followed Abdool out, and said to him, "They sent for you to ridicule and shame you; but, thank God, no cause of shame has been found in you."

May 5.—To-day a Mahometan Physician sent to request that Abdool would visit him in the evening. He accordingly went, and found him an attendant on the Royal Family at Jondpore. He has leave to visit Agra, owing to sickness in his family, which required change of air. He had heard of Abdool's conversation yesterday, and could not believe he was the person he pretended to be. He offered to bet 2000 rupees, that a person of the family described could not change his religion. He, moreover, said, if it were such an one, he must know him, for they were at school together; and he would send for this person, (viz. Abdool Messee,) and prove him to be an impostor. On Abdool's going to his house, nothing could exceed the physician's astonishment, to find him the very person described, and his own school fellow. They had a long and friendly conversation about their former intercourse; and

read several chapters in St. Matthew, and other parts of the New Testament. On Abdool's answering his objections, he said, "This is the way I understand you did yesterday, silencing every body by reference to their own customs; and so I perceive Islam will not stand." He took a copy of St. Matthew, and desired to have the whole New Testament.

Sunday, May 9.—The attendance in the afternoon was not so great as on some former occasions; but those who came were attentive. In the evening, out of the Fort, a greater number than ever was collected, with evident desire to hear the Word.—They checked one another, in order to preserve silence. One, impatient of the noise around him, cried aloud, "keep silence, ye accursed band let us hear the Word. Ye have six days in the week, have ye not, to babble and talk." The subject was, *This is a faithful saying*. Several were in tears. One man came forward and declared he would be a Christian.—He was sick, had long been ill, did not expect to live long, and these words comforted him. He had never before heard such comfortable words.

May 10.—The above man came, with his wife and two children. He had been a soldier in the service of some native prince; and has lingered long under wounds received in that service. He did not discover such a sense of sin as to lead us to give him baptism, as he desired. Several Mahometans came and passed the day with Abdool. It has been a day of evident joy in the Lord with him.—I was deeply affected by his undisguised relation of the alternate pride and despondency by which he is assaulted.

Sunday, May 16.—Fewer attended Divine Service to-day in the Fort.—Of those who did, one has been an attendant for some time past. After worship, he said to Abdool, with



much appearance of anxiety, that when he was hearing him, no doubt remained on his mind of the truth of what he had heard; but when he went among his own friends, they warned him against the Gospel, and told him it was not the true Gospel, for the English had corrupted it. He begged Abdool to decide this doubt for him. Abdool recommended prayer to him. In the evening, many collected to hear the Word without the Fort; and great attention was paid to the account of the manna, with its application to Christ. A very old woman, a native of Nujif in Arabia, came up to Abdool after the discourse, and held a long conversation with him in Persian; in which she repeatedly asked, if there were no salvation out of Christ; and, on his repeatedly assuring her there was not, she said at last, then she must become a Christian. The old soldier attended, and still professed his desire of becoming a Christian.

May 26, 1813.—A Mahometan came to beg that Abdool would go and look at some houses for hire—He accordingly went early and spent the whole day in conversation with different persons at different places. He found a house suitable, and agreed to hire it.

A learned Hindoo took him aside, and asked him to say plainly the reason, why he wished to institute Schools. Abdool replied, he did not wish to conceal his design, that all should become Christians; but that no force would ever be put upon their wishes. The Hindoo said, he believed so; "but we are sure," said he, "if our children hear the Gospel, they will forsake our religion; for, as it is, whenever they go among the Sahibs, they come home wishing to be like them. One says, 'Buy me a buggy;' another says, 'Let me wear English clothes;' and we are sure that if they read your books, as they grow up, they will laugh at their fa-

thers' customs.'

June 8.—Among others who came to Abdool, was a young man dressed in the height of the Mahometan fashion. He enquired for the person who, from being a Mahometan, had turned Christian. Abdool said, he was the man. "Oh no," said the youth, "you are not he; he was a Mahometan, and is become Feringee, and dresses as the English." Abdool said he was the person. The other expressed his surprise, and asked the reason of his change. Abdool, with his usual simplicity, told the story of his conversion; and on his mentioning his having heard the truth from a Sahib, the young man confessed he was the son of an English officer, and had been left entirely to the care of Mahometans, who had instilled into his mind a hatred of the Gospel; and, on his father's death, he embraced Islam: but, now that he saw a Mahometan become Christian, and heard his reasons, he was much in perplexity. Abdool was affected to tears by this relation. The young man also wept. He begged Abdool would not mention the story of his descent, for to-day he felt deeply ashamed, and would now set himself to learn the Gospel.

June 10, 1813.—To-day the doctrine of Christ witnessed a triumph. For three weeks past a Faqueer of the Jogi tribe, has come frequently to our morning worship in the School. On Tuesday the chapter to be read in order was John xvii. The subject of it, and our Lord's manner towards his disciples, arrested the attention of the Jogi, and the tears flowed plentifully down his cheeks. To-day he brought his wife and child; said he was a convert to Jesus without reserve; and began of himself to take off his Faqueer's dress. He first took the beads from off his neck; then broke the string to which the charm given him by his gooro was suspended; then broke off an iron ring worn



round his waist, and to which an iron rod about two feet long was attached. He then put on some old clothes which we had by us, and said, now he wished to be instructed in the Gospel, and to get employment. A rupee was given to procure food for the family, with which the wife went and bought a spinning-wheel, saying, she would spin and earn their livelihood. These are wonders in the history of a Hindoo! The whole family afterward eat their dinner with Abdool of their own accord.

To-day an old woman also, who has constantly heard Abdool on Sundays, brought her little all from the house of a Mahometan, where she had long lived, and took up her abode among the Christians, expressing a heart affecting sense of her value for the Gospel of Christ.

A Leper, too, who has spent years in religious observances without finding rest to his mind, and who has been some time in constant attendance on the means of grace, took up his abode with us, saying, Jesus would cure the inward leprosy of his soul.

The old soldier, also, and his wife and son have cast in their lot with us.

The school to-day increased to ten, expressly under the idea that it is a Christian Institution.

June 12.—The whole city seems moved with this new thing which is come unto them; but not a tongue stirs in opposition. As a proof of this the Mooftee of the court, whose father is Khazee of Khazat, or native Chief Justice of the Company's head Court in Calcutta, sent to beg that Abdool would forget the attempt that had been made by his relatives in Calcutta to procure his imprisonment, and would visit him (the Mooftee,) and be friends with him.

It would be no easy task to record all the interesting discussions which have taken place during these two

days between Abdool and the principal Mahometans in the city. One of them observed, that Abdool was so provided with armour, that none of their weapons (arguments) could reach him.

*To be continued.*

## INDIA.

*Mr. Hand's Discourse with some Heathens at Belhary, after they had been worshiping at an Idol Temple.*

[Extracted from his Journal]

In the evening I walked into the Pettah. Observing a number of persons worshiping in one of the pagoda. I noticed what passed, and waited till the worship was finished. Coming out, they presented me with some of the flowers which they had offered to their idol. I then said to them, 'My dear friends, I have just seen you paying worship to that image; and I cannot tell you how much it has grieved me. Do you ask me why?—I will tell you. Such worship makes the great God angry with you: it hardens and darkens your minds, increases your sins, and I am afraid will shut you out of Heaven.—I tell me, my dear friends, tell me my brethren (for we are the children of one common Father) O tell me, from such worship what can you obtain? If you fall into sickness, poverty, or sorrow, can this stone help you?—You are sinners, can that image forgive you? You need wisdom, can that stone instruct you? You desire happiness—can that satisfy your souls, and make you happy? Tell me, my brethren, are your minds satisfied and happy from what you have now been doing? Several of them were candid enough to answer "No, no; we are not."

I then ask you, why you worship



that image? Is God like that black unsightly form? Can he be pleased with such worship as this? No; he is a pure and holy Spirit, an almighty, all-seeing, omnipotent Spirit, and requires his creatures to worship him in spirit and in truth. O! my brethren, God is your Father! he made and supports you; but by neglecting him, and giving the honour and worship due him to senseless images, you grieve your kind Father, and make him angry with you. God is your husband; and you should love him with all your soul, and keep your minds and bodies pure and chaste for him alone; he has made you for himself, that he might delight in you; but you are unfaithful to him; and neglecting his love, you prostitute your bodies and your souls to a base idol!—My brethren, your bodies must soon die; but your souls can never die, but must live forever, either in Heaven or in Hell: but this is not the road to Heaven. They who neglect the God of Heaven, and give his glory to a senseless stone, can never obtain Heaven; and if God will not receive them to Heaven, they must be for ever miserable in Hell?

Having thus endeavoured to convince them of the folly and sin of idolatry, I spake to them of Christ, and the way of salvation by faith in him.

They acknowledged it was all very good; but there was no provision for the belly. I told them that if they would trust their souls in the hands of Christ he would take care that their bodies should be supplied; for he had promised that his people should not want any good thing—Poor creatures! their belly is indeed their principal god. If their sensual appetites are but gratified, they care for little else.

I understand that one of my auditors was the Hamildar, or chief man of a large village, about 40 miles distant who had come to Belhary to worship at this pagoda. Many of his

people were also present. As this man paid particular attention and respect, perhaps, what he has heard may afford an opening in his village at some future time.



FROM THE RECORDER.

SIR,

If you think the following anecdote will interest the readers of your paper, you are at liberty to insert it.

*A TRACT instead of a CENT.*

Will you please to give me a cent? cried a little ragged black boy to a gentleman, as he was passing by a miserable log hut on the side of a mountain, in the western part of Massachusetts. What will you do with a cent, said the gentleman; will you buy rum with it? Yes, said the poor ignorant boy. Will not a book do as well?—Yes, sir. Accordingly the story of “poor blind Ellen,” and “the Negro servant,” were given him, with a charge to have his parents read them to him.

The traveller passed on, and being about to return that way in a few weeks, thought within himself that he would call, and see what effect the tracts had produced.

It was a pleasant morning in June, and about 10 o'clock, when the gentleman returning, had begun to descend the mountain. A short turn in the road brought to view the negro hut, the circumstance of presenting the tracts, and the promise he had made of visiting the human creatures who dwelt there.

On knocking, a voice bade him enter, but it was difficult to open the shackling door. After a momentary effort, a stout negro man within came to his assistance. On entering, the light from a few broken panes, in addition to that which shone through the crevices of the sides, the roof and the floor of the hovel, served to disclose two black women, and four or



Five children perched on benches and stools, which scarcely prevented them from falling between the loose floor-boards into the cellar. The family appeared to be at breakfast, a thing quite singular, considering the time of day. All hands and jaws now ceased to move, hunger was forgotten, and every eye turned to the stranger.

Have you read those little books that were left here some time ago?—No sir, was the reply. The gentleman expressed some surprise, and enquired if they *could read*, and if they had requested their neighbours to read for them? The answer was satisfactory; and it was evident that the truths illustrated by the stories of "Negro servant," and "poor blind Ellen," had not been wholly without effect.

The man appeared sober. One of the women who seemed to be there on a visit, burst into tears, and said, "surely the Lord has sent me to be here at this time. I am glad I am here." She was so overwhelmed with weeping, that she went out to conceal it. The other poor woman who belonged to the house appeared very ignorant, and said with apparent concern, and some indications of doubt, "I hope I have a soul. I hope the Lord will have mercy on me when I die; I try to do as well as I can."

By this time all the children were sobbing and seemed quite astonished. The larger ones endeavoured to cover their faces, and a little one clung closer to its mother's neck.

After stating briefly the occasion of all our miseries, and the necessity of looking to God for the pardon of our sins, the gentleman proposed to pray with them, which he did in as simple and intelligible a manner as he could. All were silent and attentive, after the poor woman had made her children understand that they must stand up and be quiet. The stranger then told them to look to the

concerns of their souls, and bade them farewell. They returned many thanks, and requested another visit, if in passing it should be convenient.

The woman who appeared to be a guest, and perhaps was pious, especially blessed the Lord for the words that were spoken to them.

As so much sympathy was excited, it is difficult to judge whether any lasting benefit will result to the wretched inhabitants of the hovel, but to the person who gave the tracts, and spent a few moments in discovering their effects, the interview was attended with more profit and pleasure than hours of thoughtless gaiety or useless speculation.

L. S. B.

#### BIBLE ANECDOTES.

The following Anecdotes are from the Report of one of the Associations belonging to the North-East London Auxiliary Bible Society.

A woman called on me to beg a Bible: I said, 'Are you too poor to pay a penny a week?' 'Yes, I am,' she answered: 'I am a widow, with two children: my bed is straw, and my only support is sixpence a-day.' I called upon her, and found her story to be true: a Bible was given her, which she received with great joy. Her aged mother, who was sick, desired to be lifted from her bed of straw, that she might stand up to thank the Society. When she recovered, she called some of her poor neighbors together, and read to them: one of them said, 'I wonder who made God?' 'O,' replied she, 'how can you think of uttering such a wicked saying? and so ignorant!' 'Well,' said she, 'I do not know any thing about it, but I will have a Bible, and then I *shall* know!'

Another poor woman shewed her Testament to a very wicked and ignorant man; and endeavoured to inform him what the Bible contained.



He was surprised; and immediately gave her three pence to get his name put down as a subscriber of that sum per week for a Bible. He went home to his wife, and said, 'I have been subscribing for a Bible.'—'A Bible?' said she, 'What is a Bible?'—'A book,' replied he, 'that says there is to be a Day of Judgment, and that you are to be called to an account for all the wicked things you have done.' They are now subscribing for a Bible with great cheerfulness.

Another case I shall mention, is that of a family on whom I called to get security for a poor woman, who was to have a box of linen from a benevolent Society. While one went to borrow a pen and ink, I entered into conversation with the man about some pictures that hung round the room. The story was, Joseph and his Brethren. On my observing that Joseph was represented far too young, he said with a smile of great contempt, 'For my part, I know nothing at all about it. I never read a page of the Bible in my life; neither do I want to read it. This is what I amuse myself with,' pointing to a piece of music, 'and this is what I delight in.'—'Well,' I said, 'that is amusement for time; the Bible is for eternity!' The man changed countenance instantly, and made no answer. I continued the conversation. His wife, who stood by during the time, burst into tears, and said, 'Oh! am I too old to learn to read it? I will pay six pence per week to that Society which you say will let us have one for a penny, and we will go and hear the Word of God preached.'—I have the satisfaction to say, that they regularly attend Divine Worship, and now read the Bible daily. By their persuasion, two other families have become subscribers for Bibles.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL ANECDOTE.

*From the Appendix to the Fourth*

#### *Report of the Hibernian Sunday School Society.*

As I was taking a walk some weeks since, I called at a house which I had not been in the habit of visiting, though the two children were regular Sunday scholars: after being received with a hearty welcome, and the most unequivocal expressions of joy, I sat down, and the good woman of the house addressed me as follows—'We can't tell how happy we are to see you, for you must know, the children look upon you as their father; they were all in great grief of late when you were taken ill at A——, for they feared the school would come to nothing if you were dead.' Having expressed my hope that it would not fail, should it please God to call me hence, the good woman proceeded in the following manner.

'I lived several years at your friend Mr. J. M's; my master feared God, but I was totally ignorant.—When he would begin to read, I would contrive to get away, for I hated to hear reading. I tell you this, that you may know how bad I was. It however pleased God to enlighten my mind under a sermon, which produced an earnest desire to flee from the wrath to come. Just at this time (about seventeen years ago) the Sunday school was begun, and I thought I could give all the world for it, if it were possible that I could learn to read the word of God. I inquired of many persons, whether it was possible that I could learn, as I was near forty years old; but they gave me no encouragement. At length I made free to ask you, and the answer you gave me, I will never forget as long as I live. In short, sir, you told me you had no doubt, if I persevered, but I would succeed. I believed your word; gave a penny for a small book; attended the Sunday school; learned the letters; began to spell; and in some time



bought a Testament, which, thank God, I was enabled to read.' Having expressed my hope that she had derived instruction and consolation from the Sacred Oracles, in the varied circumstances of life, she answered in the affirmative, quoting several pertinent passages, and applying them to her own state; at the same time observing, 'my comfort has been greatly increased this year; for as you know my step daughter Hannah, and my little daughter Anne, have attended the Sunday school since ever they were able; and Hannah got a premium of a Bible last year. Little Anne also improved so fast, that she was removed to the first class, and can now read the Bible. During the winter, they followed the advice given, when the school was dismissed, and read three or four chapters every night; and, as I was not before acquainted with the Bible, (the Old Testament) it was like a new world opened to us; for though we are ignorant, the children tell what they hear at the school, and we speak about the meaning of what they read; and this affords us great comfort.' I observed that Hannah and Anne had given much satisfaction by their improvement and good conduct in school; but wished to know what effect it had on their conduct at home. She replied, 'My step-daughter Hannah was only two months at the weekly school in her life; you see her improvement in learning, and she does her work without being bid; she will not suffer me to do a hard turn; she is good to her little sister, and she could not be better to me if she were my own child a hundred times over; I hope Anne will copy after her; in short, we have nothing but peace.' After expressing their gratitude to God for the benefits received from the Sunday school, and requesting an occasional visit, I took my leave.

From the London Evangelical Magazine.

### A HINDOO AT THE POINT OF DEATH.

When at the point of death, almost all the Hindoos are in a state of the most perplexing anxiety, like persons on board a vessel in a storm, when the vessel has become wholly unmanageable. Such a wretched Hindoo, in these moments, is often heard giving vent to his grief and fears in the midst of his relatives, as he lies by the Ganges. If he be advanced in years, they endeavor to comfort him by reminding him that he could not expect to live much longer; that he leaves a numerous family in comfortable circumstances; and further, that his merits will certainly raise him to heaven. The dying man however, finds no comfort in the merit of his works, but gives utterance to excessive grief, in some such language as this:—'I! what meritorious deeds have I performed? I have done nothing but sin. Ah! where shall I go!—into what hell shall I be plunged!—What shall I do?—How long shall I continue in hell?—What hope can I have of going to heaven? Here I have been suffering for sin; and now I must go and renew my suffering! How many births must I undergo? Where will my sorrows terminate?' As a forlorn and miserable hope, he calls upon his friends to give him their blessing, that Gunga may receive him; and he takes his leave of them in the utmost perturbation of mind. An Hindoo knows nothing of that hope which is 'an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast.'

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